ORAL ARGUMENT NOT YET SCHEDULED

Case Nos. 11-1355, 11-1356, 11-1403, and 11-1404

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA CIRCUIT

VERIZON, Appellant,

V.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION, Appellee.

INDEPENDENT TELEPHONE AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS PROVIDERS ET AL., Intervenors.

On Appeal of an Order of The Federal Communications Commission

FINAL INITIAL SEPARATE BRIEF OF APPELLANTS/PETITIONERS METROPCS COMMUNICATIONS, INC. ET AL.

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January 18, 2013

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CERTIFICATE AS TO PARTIES, RULINGS AND RELATED CASES

The undersigned attorney of record, in accordance with D.C. Cir. R. 28(a)(1), hereby certifies as follows:

I. PARTIES AND AMICI

The principal parties in these consolidated cases are Appellants-Petitioners MetroPCS Communications, Inc. and its FCC-licensed affiliates (MetroPCS 700 MHz, LLC; MetroPCS AWS, LLC; MetroPCS California, LLC; MetroPCS Florida, LLC; MetroPCS Georgia, LLC; MetroPCS Massachusetts, LLC; MetroPCS Michigan, Inc.; MetroPCS Networks California, LLC; MetroPCS Networks Florida LLC; MetroPCS Texas, LLC; and MetroPCS Wireless, Inc.); Appellant-Petitioner Verizon; Petitioner Free Press; Appellee-Respondent Federal Communications Commission; and Respondent United States of America. ITTA – The Independent Telephone and Telecommunications Alliance, the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, the National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates, Public Knowledge, Vonage Holdings Corporation, and the Open Internet Coalition have intervened in support of Appellee-Respondent. CTIA – The Wireless Association has intervened in support of Appellants-Petitioners. The Commonwealth of Virginia has notified the Court of its intent to file an amicus curiae brief in support of Appellants-Petitioners.

The persons who appeared before the agency in the proceedings below are:

100 Black Men of America et al.

2Wire, Inc.

4G Americas, LLC

4Info, Inc.

ACT 1 Group et al.

Adam Candeub and Daniel John McCartney

ADTRAN, Inc.

Adventia Innovative Systems

African American Chamber of Commerce - Milwaukee

African Methodist Episcopal Church

Aircell LLC

Akamai Technologies, Inc.

Alabama State Conference of the NAACP

Alarm Industry Communications Committee

Alcatel-Lucent

Allbritton Communications Company

Alliance for Digital Equality

Alliance for Telecommunications Industry Solutions

Amazon.com

American Arab Chamber of Commerce

American Association of Independent Music

American Association of People with Disabilities

American Business Media

American Cable Association

American Center for Law and Justice

American Civil Rights Union

American Consumer Institute CCR

American Council of the Blind

American Federation of Television & Radio Artists, Directors Guild of America, International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, Screen Actors Guild

American Homeowners Grassroots Alliance

American Indian Chamber of Commerce of Wisconsin

American Legislative Exchange Council

American Library Association, Association of Research Libraries, EDUCAUSE

Americans for Prosperity

Americans for Tax Reform and Media Freedom Project

Americans for Tax Reform Digital Liberty Project

Americans for Technology Leadership

Annie McGrady

Anti-Defamation League

AOL Inc.

Arts+Labs

Asian American Justice Center

Assemblywoman Debbie Smith

Association for Competitive Technology

Association of Research Libraries

Association of Research Libraries, EDUCAUSE, Internet2, NYSERNet, and ACUTA

AT&T Inc.

Automation Alley

Ball State University Center for Information and Communications Science

Barbara A. Cherry

Barbara S. Esbin

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Will and Grundy Counties

Black Leadership Forum, Inc.

Bret Swanson, President, Entropy Economics LLC

Bright House Networks, LLC

Broadband Institute of California and Broadband Regulatory Clinic

Broadcast Music, Inc.

BT Americas Inc.

Cablevision Systems Corporation

California Consumers for Net Neutrality

California Public Utilities Commission

Camiant, Inc.

Carbon Disclosure Project

Career Link Inc.

Catherine Sandoval and Broadband Institute of California

CDMA Development Group, Inc.

Center for Democracy & Technology

Center for Individual Freedom

Center for Media Justice, Consumers Union, Media Access Project, and New America

Center for Rural Strategies

Center for Social Media

Central Washington Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

CenturyLink

Chairman Kenneth D. Koehler, McHenry County Board

Chamber of Commerce of St. Joseph County

Charter Communications

Christopher S. Yoo

Christopher Sacca

Cincinnati Bell Wireless LLC

Cisco Systems, Inc.

City of Philadelphia

Clearwire Corporation

Coalition of Minority Chambers

ColorOfChange.org

Comcast Corporation

Communications Workers of America

Communications Workers of America—District 2 in West Virginia

Communications Workers of America—Local 3806

Communications Workers of America—Local 4900

Competitive Enterprise Institute

COMPTEL

CompTIA

Computer & Communications Industry Association

Computer Communications Industry Association, Consumer Electronics Association

Computing Technology Industry Association

CONNECT

Connecticut Association for United Spanish Action, Inc.

Connecticut Technology Council

Consumer Policy Solutions

Corning Incorporated

Corporation for National Research Initiatives

Council of Baptist Pastors of Detroit & Vicinity, Inc.

Covad Communications Company

Cox Communications, Inc.

Craig Settles (Successful.com)

CREDO Action

Cricket Communications, Inc.

CTIA - The Wireless Association

CWA Indiana State Council

CWA Local 4900

Damian Kulash

Daniel Lyons

Data Foundry, Inc.

David Clark, William Lehr, and Steve Bauer

David D.F. Uran, Mayor, City of Crown Point, Indiana

Deborah Turner

Debra Brown

Derek Leebaert

Dickinson Area Partnership

Digital Education Coalition

Digital Entrepreneurs

Digital Society

DISH Network L.L.C.

Distributed Computing Industry Association

Downtown Springfield, Inc.

EarthLink, Inc.

Eastern Kentucky's Youth Association for the Arts, Inc.

Economic Development Council of Livingston County

Eight Mile Boulevard Association

El Centro

Electronic Frontier Foundation

Elgin Area Chamber

Elizabeth A. Dooley, Ed. D.

Entertainment Software Association

Ericsson Inc.

Erie Neighborhood House

Fiber-to-the-Home Council

Free Press

Frontier Communications

Future of Music Coalition

Future of Privacy Forum

G. Baeslack

General Communication, Inc.

Genesee Regional Chamber of Commerce

George Ou

Georgetown/Scott County Kentucky Chamber of Commerce

Georgia Minority Supplier Development Council

Global Crossing North America, Inc.

Global Intellectual Property Center

Google Inc.

Great River Economic Development Foundation

Greater Kokomo Economic Development Alliance

GSM Association

GVNW Consulting, Inc.

Hamilton County Alliance

Hance Haney

Hannah Miller

Harris Corporation

HB Clark

Hispanic Leadership Fund

Hispanic Technology and Telecommunications Partnership

Hmong/American Friendship Association, Inc.

Hughes Network Systems, LLC

Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

Independent Creator Organizations

Independent Film & Television Alliance

Independent Telephone & Telecommunications Alliance

Indiana Secretary of State

Indianapolis Urban League

Information and Communications Manufacturers and Service Providers

Information Technology and Innovation Foundation

Information Technology Industry Council

Institute for Emerging Leaders, Inc.

Institute for Liberty

Institute for Policy Innovation

Institute for Policy Integrity

Intellectual Property and Communications Law Program at Michigan State University College of Law

International Documentary Association, Film Independent, and others

Internet Freedom Coalition

Internet Innovation Alliance

Internet Society

Intrado Inc. and Intrado Communications Inc.

Ionary Consulting

Jared Morris

Jeanne K. Magill, Pabst Farms Development Inc.

Joe Armstrong, Tennessee State Representative

Joe Homnick

John Palfrey

John Staurulakis, Inc.

Johnson County Board of Commissioners

Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies

Joliet Region Chamber of Commerce & Industry

Kankakee County Farm Bureau

Karen Kerrigan, President & CEO, Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council

Karen Maples

Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Labor Council for Latin American Advancement

Lake Superior Community Partnership

Lakewood Chamber of Commerce

Latin American Chamber of Commerce of Charlotte

Latin Chamber of Commerce of Nevada

Latinos for Internet Freedom and Media Action Grassroots Network

Latinos in Information Sciences & Technology Association

Laurence Brett Glass, d/b/a LARIAT

Lawerence E. Denney, Speaker of the House, State of Idaho

Lawrence County Economic Growth Council

Lawrence Morrow

Leadership East Kentucky

League of United Latin American Citizens

Leap Wireless International, Inc. and Cricket Communications, Inc.

Level 3 Communications LLC

Links Technology Solutions, Inc.

Lisa Marie Hanlon, TelTech Communications LLC

M3X Media, Inc.

Mabuhay Alliance

Maneesh Pangasa

Mary-Anne Wolf

Matthew J. Cybulski

Mayor Brad Stephens

Mayor George Pabey, City of East Chicago, Indiana

Mayor Leon Rockingham, Jr.

Mayor Rudolph Clay, Gary, Indiana

McAllen Solutions

Media Action Grassroots Network, ColorOfChange.org, Presente.org, Applied Research Center, Afro-Netizen, National Association of Hispanic Journalists, Native Public Media, and Rural Broadband Policy Group

MegaPath, Inc. and Covad Communications Company

Messaging Anti-Abuse Working Group

MetroPCS Communications, Inc.

Michele Hodges, Troy Chamber

Microsoft Corp.

Mid-Atlantic Community Papers Association, on behalf of Association of Free Community Papers, Community Papers of Michigan, Free Community Papers of New York, Community Papers of Florida, Midwest Free Community Papers, Community Papers of Ohio and West Virginia, Southeastern Advertising Publishers Association, Wisconsin Community Papers

Mike Riley

Ministerial Alliance Against the Digital Divide

Mississippi Center for Education Innovation

Mississippi Center for Justice

MLB Advanced Media, L.P.

Mobile Future

Mobile Internet Content Coalition

Motion Picture Association of America, Inc.

Motorola, Inc.

Nacional Records

Nate Zolman

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

National Association of Manufacturers

National Association of Realtors

National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates

National Association of Telecommunications Office & Advisors

National Black Chamber of Commerce

National Cable & Telecommunications Association

National Coalition on Black Civic Participation

National Council of La Raza

National Emergency Number Association

National Exchange Carrier Association, Inc.

National Exchange Carrier Association, Inc., National Telecommunications

Cooperative Association, Organization for the Promotion &

Advancement of Small Telecommunication Companies, Eastern Rural

Telecom Association, Western Telecommunications Alliance

National Farmers Union

National Foundation for Women Legislators High Speed Internet Caucus

National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators

National Hispanic Media Coalition

National Medical Association

National Organization of Black Elected Legislative Women et al.

National Organizations

National Rural Health Association

National Spinal Cord Injury Association

National Taxpayers Union

National Telecommunications Cooperative Association

National Urban League

Netflix, Inc.

Network 2010

New America Foundation

New Jersey Rate Counsel

New York State Office of Chief Information Officer/Office for Technology (CIO/OFT)

Nicholas Bramble, Information Society Project at Yale Law School

Nickolaus E. Leggett

Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Corporation

Nokia Siemens Networks US LLC

Northern Nevada Black Cultural Awareness Society

Office of the Attorney General of Virginia

Office of the Mayor, City of Peru

Older Adults Technology Services, Inc.

Open Internet Coalition

Open Media and Information Companies Initiative

Operation Action U.P.

Oregon State Grange

Organization for the Promotion & Advancement of Small Telecommunication Companies

PAETEC Holding Corp.

Patricia Dye

Performing Arts Alliance

Phil Kerpen, Vice President, Americans for Prosperity

Property Rights Alliance

Public Interest Advocates

Public Interest Commenters

QUALCOMM Incorporated

Owest Communications International Inc.

R. L. Barnes

Rainbow PUSH Coalition

Recording Industry Association of America

Red Hat, Inc.

Rev. W.L.T. Littleton

Richmond Chamber of Commerce

RNK Communications

Robert K. McEwen d/b/a PowerView Systems

Robert Steele, Cook County Commissioner

Rural Cellular Association

Safe Internet Alliance

Saint Xavier University

Sandvine Inc.

Satellite Broadband Commenters

SavetheInternet.com

Scott Cleland

Scott Jordan

Sean Kraft

Sean Sowell

Seth Johnson

Shelby County Development Corporation

Skype Communications S.A.R.L.

Sling Media, Inc.

Smartcomm, LLC

Smithville Telephone Company

Software & Information Industry Association

Songwriters Guild of America

Sony Electronics Inc.

Southern Company Services, Inc.

Southern Wayne County Regional Chamber of Commerce

Sprint Nextel Corp.

St. Louis Society for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Stephen Beck

Steve Forte, Chief Strategy Officer, Telerik

stic.man of Dead Prez

SureWest Communications

Susan Jacobi

TDS Telecommunications Corp.

Tech Council of Maryland

TechAmerica

Telecom Italia, S.P.A.

Telecom Manufacturer Coalition

Telecommunications Industry Association

TeleDimensions, Inc.

Telefonica S.A.

Telephone Association of Maine

Texas Office of Public Utility Counsel

Texas Public Policy Foundation

Texas Statewide Telephone Cooperative, Inc.

The Ad Hoc Telecommunications Users Committee

The Berroteran Group

The Disability Network

The Free State Foundation

The Greater Centralia Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Office

The Greenlining Institute

The Heartland Institute

The Nebraska Rural Independent Companies

The Senior Alliance

Thomas C. Poorman, President, Zanesville-Muskingum County Chamber of Commerce

Thomas D. Sydnor II, Senior Fellow and Director, Center for the Study of Digital Property at the Progress & Freedom Foundation

Thomas Richard Reinsel, Executive in Residence, Sewickley Oak Capital

Thomas W. Hazlett

Tim Wu

Time Warner Cable Inc.

T-Mobile USA, Inc.

tw telecom inc.

U.S. Chamber of Commerce

Union Square Ventures

United Service Organizations of Illinois

United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

United States Telecom Association

UNITY: Journalists of Color, Inc.

Upper Peninsula Economic Development Alliance

Upper Peninsula Health Plan

Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle

Various Advocates for the Open Internet

Verizon and Verizon Wireless

Via Christi Health System eCare-ICU

Village of Maywood

Vincent Watts of the Greater Stark County Urban League

Voice on the Net Coalition

Vonage Holdings Corp.

Voto Latino

Washington State Grange

Wayne Brough, James Gattuso, Hance Haney, Ryan Radia, and James Lakely

Windstream Communications, Inc.

Winston-Salem Urban League

Wireless Communications Association International, Inc.

Wireless Internet Service Providers Association

World Institute on Disability et al.

Writers Guild of America, East AFL-CIO

Writers Guild of America, West, Inc.

XO Communications, LLC

YWCA of St. Joseph County

II. RULING UNDER REVIEW

Petitioners seek review of the following FCC decision: In the Matter Of

Preserving The Open Internet, 25 F.C.C.R. 17905 (Dec. 21, 2010).

RELATED CASES III.

MetroPCS is not aware of any related cases other than those consolidated before this Court. MetroPCS disagrees with Verizon's designation of Cellco Partnership d/b/a Verizon Wireless v. FCC, Nos. 11-1135 & 11-1136 (D.C. Cir.), as a related case. See Verizon/MetroPCS Joint Br., Certificate of Parties, Rulings, and Related Cases, at xii-xiii. Although the Commission has invoked some of the same bases of Title III jurisdiction and Verizon similarly has challenged that order as running afoul of the common-carrier prohibition applicable to private mobile radio service, the similarity ends there. That case involves a different order, different regulations, certain different bases of authority, and completely different subject matter (data roaming agreements between wireless carriers).

Respectfully submitted,

/s/Stephen B. Kinnaird

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METROPCS MASSACHUSETTS, LLC;

Filed: 01/18/2013

METROPCS MICHIGAN, INC.;

METROPCS NETWORKS CALIFORNIA,

LLC;

METROPCS NETWORKS FLORIDA

LLC;

METROPCS TEXAS, LLC; AND

METROPCS WIRELESS, INC.

January 18, 2013

CORPORATE DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

MetroPCS Communications, Inc. is a publicly traded company organized to provide wireless and data service to its customers. MetroPCS 700 MHz, LLC; MetroPCS AWS, LLC; MetroPCS California, LLC; MetroPCS Florida, LLC; MetroPCS Georgia, LLC; MetroPCS Massachusetts, LLC; MetroPCS Michigan, Inc.; MetroPCS Networks California, LLC; MetroPCS Networks Florida LLC; and MetroPCS Texas, LLC are wholly-owned subsidiaries of MetroPCS Wireless, Inc., which in turn is a wholly-owned direct subsidiary of MetroPCS, Inc., which in turn is a wholly-owned direct subsidiary of MetroPCS Communications, Inc. MetroPCS Communications, Inc. has no parent corporation, and only one publicly-traded company, BlackRock, Inc., through its subsidiary BlackRock Institutional Trust Company, N.A., owns more than 10 percent of its stock.

STATEMENT REGARDING DEFERRED APPENDIX

The parties have conferred and will use a deferred joint appendix.

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*Authorities upon which we chiefly rely are marked with asterisks.	

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_	332(c)(2)
	332(d)(1)
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§ § § Amer M	3.1
§ § § Amer M 11 Appr	3.1

GLOSSARY

4G Fourth Generation

Act Communications Act of 1934, as

amended

CMRS Commercial mobile radio service

Commission Federal Communications Commission

FCC Federal Communications Commission

Joint Brief Joint Brief of Verizon and MetroPCS,

Verizon v. FCC, No. 11-1355 (filed

Filed: 01/18/2013

concurrently)

LTE Long Term Evolution

MetroPCS Communications, Inc. and its

wireless affiliates (MetroPCS 700 MHz, LLC; MetroPCS AWS, LLC; MetroPCS California, LLC; MetroPCS Florida, LLC; MetroPCS Georgia, LLC;

MetroPCS Massachusetts, LLC; MetroPCS Michigan, Inc.; MetroPCS Networks California, LLC; MetroPCS

Networks Florida LLC; MetroPCS Texas, LLC; and MetroPCS Wireless,

Inc.)

Mobile Internet Providers Mobile wireless broadband Internet

access providers

Mobile Internet Service Mobile wireless broadband Internet

access service

Mobile Open-Access

Rules

47 C.F.R. § 8.1, 8.3. 8.5(b)

Order In the Matter Of Preserving The Open

Internet, 25 F.C.C.R. 17905 (Dec. 21,

2010)

JURISDICTIONAL STATEMENT

Respondent the Federal Communications Commission ("FCC" or "Commission") issued its final order, *In the Matter Of Preserving The Open Internet*, 25 F.C.C.R. 17905 ("*Order*") (JA 1-194), on December 21, 2010, *see* 47 U.S.C. § 151, and published it in the Federal Register on September 23, 2011. MetroPCS Communications, Inc. and its FCC-licensed affiliates (collectively "MetroPCS") filed a timely appeal and petition for review on October 21, 2011. This Court has jurisdiction to review the *Order* under 47 U.S.C. § 402(b)(5) because MetroPCS holds licenses that the Commission declared modified in the *Order*, *see Functional Music, Inc. v. FCC*, 274 F.2d 543, 547-48 (D.C. Cir. 1959), or, alternatively, under 47 U.S.C. § 402(a) because MetroPCS timely filed a protective petition for review.

STATEMENT OF ISSUES PRESENTED FOR REVIEW

- (1) Whether the Commission has the unbounded authority to regulate mobile Internet access according to its conception of the public interest even when not exercising a delegated statutory power?
- (2) Whether the Commission's licensing powers provide authority to promulgate mobile open-access rules as license conditions if those conditions are not based on any substantive statutory authority granted to the Commission?

STATUTES AND REGULATIONS

Applicable statutes and regulations not contained in the addendum hereto appear in the Addendum of the Joint Brief of Verizon and MetroPCS, *Verizon v. FCC*, No. 11-1355 ("Joint Br.").

INTRODUCTION

In imposing intrusive "open access" rules upon mobile broadband Internet access providers ("mobile Internet providers"), the Commission seeks to wield an unbounded power under Title III of the Communications Act of 1934 ("Act") to regulate such providers according to its conception of the public interest. The Commission misconceives the Title III scheme, which is one of enumerated powers, and mistakes the public-interest *standard* that Congress directed the Commission to apply in exercising its given powers as a grant of untrammeled authority. As this Court has held, "The FCC cannot act in the 'public interest' if the agency does not otherwise have the authority to promulgate the regulations at issue." Motion Picture Ass'n of America, Inc. v. F.C.C., 309 F.3d 796, 806 (D.C. Cir. 2002). The Commission has no statutory authority that justifies the mobile open-access rules. Further, the Commission cannot impose license conditions if it lacks the statutory authority in the first instance to regulate. Accordingly, this Court must vacate the mobile open-access rules.

STATEMENT OF THE CASE

This is a proceeding for judicial review of *In the Matter Of Preserving The Open Internet*, 25 F.C.C.R. 17905 (Dec. 21, 2010), which promulgated the challenged mobile open-access rules, 47 C.F.R. § 8.1, 8.3, & 8.5(b).

STATEMENT OF THE FACTS AND PROCEEDINGS BELOW

A. The Commission's Open-Access Order

In the *Order*, the Commission prescribed open-access rules for both fixed and mobile broadband Internet access providers. *See* 47 C.F.R. Part 8. For mobile Internet providers like MetroPCS, the Commission imposed two requirements: transparency and a prohibition on blocking websites and certain applications. The transparency rule requires that a mobile Internet provider "publicly disclose accurate information regarding the network management practices, performance, and commercial terms of its broadband Internet access services sufficient for consumers to make informed choices regarding use of such services and for content, application, service, and device providers to develop, market, and maintain Internet offerings." *Id.* § 8.3. Under the "no-blocking" rule, the mobile Internet provider "shall not block consumers from accessing lawful websites, subject to reasonable network management; nor shall such person block

applications that compete with the provider's voice or video telephony services, subject to reasonable network management." *Id.* § 8.5.

The Commission invoked certain statutes as authority for both its mobile and fixed open-access rules. MetroPCS and Verizon have jointly challenged the FCC's authority under those statutes. Joint Br. at 27-37. But the Commission also justified its mobile open-access rules based on its separate Title III authority over spectrum licensees. Because MetroPCS and Verizon have taken divergent positions in another case involving the Commission's Title III authority, this Court granted MetroPCS this separate brief on Title III issues. *See* Briefing Order, *Verizon v. FCC*, No. 11-1355 (May 25, 2012); Joint Unopposed Mot. To Establish Briefing Format, No. 11-1355, at 5-6 (April 23, 2012).

B. Effect Of Open-Access Order On MetroPCS

MetroPCS provides mobile wireless voice and broadband Internet access service ("mobile Internet service") in selected U.S. metropolitan areas and serves more than 9.3 million subscribers, making it the fifth largest U.S. facilities-based mobile broadband wireless carrier. MetroPCS targets a mass market underserved by the larger national wireless carriers. MetroPCS' service plans, which require no long-term contract or credit check, currently begin at \$25 per month for unlimited

nationwide voice and text service, and \$40 per month for voice, text and data service, including all applicable taxes and regulatory fees.

While MetroPCS does not provide fixed broadband Internet service, its mobile service acts as a substantial competitive alternative to such services. A significant number of MetroPCS customers use their MetroPCS service to access the Internet. By offering affordable flat-rate service, MetroPCS serves a segment of the population which otherwise would be bypassed by the Internet revolution.

MetroPCS launched voice and text service in 2002 as a late entrant competing with established national wireless carriers that have greater resources, capital, customer bases, and spectrum. MetroPCS' competitive success results from its ability to innovate. Indeed, MetroPCS pioneered popular unlimited, flatrate voice, text, and (later) data plans that have now been replicated in some form by each of the largest national carriers, and has been a disruptive and procompetitive force in the wireless industry.

MetroPCS' competitiveness depends on having continued flexibility to innovate. However, the *Order*'s open-access rules undercut MetroPCS' ability to do so, to the detriment of consumers. In deploying the first-to-market fourth generation ("4G") long term evolution ("LTE") service in the United States, MetroPCS adopted a three-tiered pricing model, which enabled consumers to

choose their desired wireless data experience at an acceptable price. Despite bringing next-generation wireless data services to underserved populations, MetroPCS became the target of complaints filed by certain advocacy groups under *Order*'s mobile open-access rules. The complaints have pended before the FCC for over 18 months. These complaints, and the prospect of others, have had a chilling effect on MetroPCS' innovation. Holding the Commission to its delegated authority is critical to promoting regulatory certainty, wireless innovation, and MetroPCS' success.

SUMMARY OF ARGUMENT

As this Court has declared, the Commission's broad latitude in exercising delegated powers under the Communications Act does not equate to an untrammeled power to regulate matters outside the Commission's statutory authority. The Commission's regulatory powers over radio are principally set forth in section 303 of the Act, which expressly limits the Commission's power to promulgate regulations or license conditions "necessary to carry out the provisions of this chapter." 47 U.S.C. § 303(r). Importantly, Congress did not grant the

¹ See Letter of Free Press to Chairman Genachowski (Jan. 10, 2011) (JA 1089-1094); Letter of Consumers Union and the Consumer Federation of America to Chairman Genachowski (Jan. 21, 2011) (JA 1095-1097).

Commission the express authority to regulate the provision of mobile Internet service; the Commission must find that authority elsewhere.

The Commission barely attempts to link its mobile open-access rules to any delegated statutory power. It claims these rules are rooted in its power under 47 U.S.C. § 303(g) to "[s]tudy new uses for radio, provide for experimental uses of frequencies, and generally encourage the larger and more effective use of radio in the public interest." But that provision relates to promotion of radio innovations, and does not grant unbridled authority to impose mandatory mobile open-access rules that regulate core business practices. The Commission also claims that the mobile open-access rules are ancillary to its authority to promote local television programming and diversity in multichannel video programming. However, the Commission never makes the requisite regulation-specific showing that such rules are reasonably necessary to its regulation of broadcasting and video programming. Indeed, the mobile no-blocking rule, which only applies to competing "voice or video telephony services," 47 C.F.R. § 8.5 (emphasis added),² cannot conceivably further the Commission's regulation of local broadcasting or video programming.

Equally untenable is the Commission's assertion of an unbounded authority to regulate radio in the public interest. The public interest is the *standard* the

² Video telephony refers to telephony services with a video link, such as Skype, not to video content services, such as Netflix.

Commission must use in exercising its given statutory authority, not a substitute for delegated statutory authority. If the Commission lacks authority in its organic statute to issue the regulation in question, it cannot do so whether or not the regulation is in the public interest.

Nor can the statutory provisions authorizing the Commission to grant, renew, and modify licenses in the public interest sustain the mobile open-access rules. *Valid* regulations become conditions of a license, but validity is measured by the Commission's substantive authority under its organic statute. Statutory provisions allowing the Commission to make individualized grants, renewals, and modifications of licenses do not constitute a roving charge to adopt sweeping industry-wide rules of general applicability that are not grounded in any enumerated Title III power. Consequently, the mobile open-access rules are *ultra vires*, and must be vacated.

STANDING

MetroPCS has standing for the reasons stated in the Joint Brief at 13.

ARGUMENT

I. THE COMMISSION MAY ONLY REGULATE WIRELESS CARRIERS UNDER ITS ENUMERATED TITLE III POWERS

In Comcast Corporation v. FCC, this Court declared that while "Congress gave the Commission broad and adaptable jurisdiction so that it can keep pace with rapidly evolving communications technologies" such as the Internet, "the allowance of wide latitude in the exercise of delegated powers is not the equivalent of untrammeled freedom to regulate activities over which the statute fails to confer ... Commission authority." 600 F.3d 642, 661 (D.C. Cir. 2010) (internal quotation marks and brackets omitted). That same limit applies to the Commission's exercise of powers under Title III of the Act, and renders the mobile open-access rules invalid. This question of delegated statutory authority is reviewed *de novo*. Am. Library Ass'n v. FCC, 406 F.3d 689, 699 (D.C. Cir. 2005).

The Title III scheme is one of enumerated powers. *See Regents v. Carroll*, 338 U.S. 586, 597-98 (1950) ("As an administrative body, the Commission must find its powers within the compass of the authority given it by Congress."). The Commission has the power to grant, suspend, modify, renew, or revoke licenses. 47 U.S.C. §§ 303(m), 307-09, 316. Congress also vested the Commission with an array of specific regulatory powers, including the authority to classify radio stations, prescribe the nature of service to be rendered by particular stations or

classes of stations, assign frequencies, prevent interference among stations, and assign call letters to licensees. *See, e.g., id.* § 303(a)-(f), (o).

Critically, Congress has given the Commission power to issue regulations and impose license conditions, but only in furtherance of an enumerated statutory power: *i.e.*, the Commission may "[m]ake such rules and regulations and prescribe such restrictions and conditions, not inconsistent with law, *as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this chapter.*" *Id.* § 303(r) (emphasis added); *see United States v. Southwestern Cable Co.*, 392 U.S. 157, 174-77 (1968) (upholding rules under section 303(r) requiring cable operators to transmit local broadcasting channels that were properly tied to the Commission's statutory powers over broadcasting).

To be sure, Congress instructed the Commission to promote "the public interest, convenience, or necessity" both in its licensing functions and in exercising its regulatory powers under section 303. *Id.* §§ 303, 307(a), 309, & 316(a)(1). But, as the Supreme Court has stated, the "public interest, convenience, or necessity" states the "standard" the Commission applies in performing its enumerated functions. *National Broadcasting Co. v. United States*, 319 U.S. 190, 227 (1943). *See also id.* at 215 ("The criterion *governing the exercise* of the Commission's licensing power is the 'public interest, convenience, or necessity."").

Thus, the "essence" of Congress's approach in Title III is "to define broad areas for regulation and to establish standards for judgment adequately related in their application to the problems to be solved." *Id.* at 219-220 (emphasis added). Section 303 and other substantive grants in Title III constitute "the broad areas for regulation," and the "public interest" defines the standard by which these enumerated powers are to be exercised. Regardless of whether regulation is in the public interest, the Commission cannot regulate in an area without statutory authority. See Columbia Broadcasting System v. United States, 316 U.S. 407, 416-17 (1942) (the Commission lacks the power to regulate the third-party contracts of licensees with networks in the absence of specific authorization to regulate chain broadcasting).

While the courts have upheld a duty of broadcasters to operate in the public interest, Red Lion Broadcasting Co. v. FCC, 395 U.S. 367, 380 (1969); Office of Communication of United Church of Christ v. FCC, 707 F.2d 1413, 1427-30 (D.C. Cir. 1983), which the Act expressly recognizes for broadcasters, 47 U.S.C. § 315(a) ("Nothing in the foregoing shall be construed as relieving broadcasters, in connection with the presentation of newscasts, news interviews, news documentaries, and on-the-spot coverage of news events, from the obligation imposed upon them under this chapter to operate in the public interest"), this

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Court has clarified that the Act does not give the Commission a boundless charge to regulate radio services according to its latest perception of the "public interest." Motion Picture Ass'n of America, Inc. v. F.C.C., 309 F.3d 796 (D.C. Cir. 2002) ("MPAA"). In MPAA, the FCC had imposed video description requirements upon both broadcasters and multichannel video programming distributors (e.g., cable and satellite companies). This Court held that the Commission lacked express statutory authority to impose these requirements, and could not rely on its general powers over radio and wire communication under section 1 (47 U.S.C. § 151) or over radio broadcasting under section 303(r) to regulate program content. Id. at 803-06. Regarding the latter, the Court held that

> [t]he FCC cannot act in the "public interest" if the agency does not otherwise have the authority to promulgate the regulations at issue. An action in the public interest is not necessarily taken to "carry out the provisions of the Act," nor is it necessarily authorized by the Act. The FCC must act pursuant to delegated authority before any "public interest" inquiry is made under § 303(r).

Id. at 806.

The Title III scheme also reflects the judgment of Congress that radio services are best provided on a competitive basis free of the intrusive government regulation typically applied to common carriers. As the Supreme Court has recognized, by designing a system of spectrum licensing, Congress chose to

promote the development of radio principally through "free competition" among licensees:

[T]he Act recognizes that broadcasters are not common carriers, and are not to be dealt with as such. Thus, the Act recognizes that the field of broadcasting is *one of free competition*. The sections dealing with broadcasting demonstrate that Congress has not, in its regulatory scheme, abandoned the principle of free competition....

and footnotes omitted). Accordingly, while the Commission may issue licenses based on which applicant may "render the best practicable service to the community," "[t]he Commission is given no supervisory control of the programs, of business management, or of policy." Id. at 475 (emphasis added); Regents, 338 U.S. at 598 ("the licensee's business as such is not regulated").

Congress has relied upon competition, rather than intrusive regulation, to promote the emergence of new radio technologies beyond traditional broadcasting. With the advent of wireless telephony, Congress authorized the Commission to engage in limited common-carrier regulation of only one type of radio service: namely, "commercial mobile radio service." 47 U.S.C. § 332(a), (d)(1). But Congress has expressly exempted other services from common-carrier regulation. Indeed, the Commission has rightly declared mobile Internet service to be <u>both</u> an information service and a private mobile service, *see Appropriate Regulatory*

Treatment for Broadband Access To The Internet Over Wireless Networks, 22 F.C.C.R. 5901 ¶¶ 19-28, 37-56 (2007), both of which are protected by statute from common-carrier regulation. 47 U.S.C. §§ 153(51), 332(c)(2). Thus, the Commission may only regulate mobile Internet service by exercising delegated powers, or by promulgating regulations necessary to the exercise of such powers.

II. THE COMMISSION HAS NO SUBSTANTIVE POWER TO IMPOSE THE MOBILE OPEN-ACCESS RULES.

Notwithstanding these requirements, the Order is tellingly devoid of analysis of any Title III substantive authority that would support the mobile openaccess rules. The few passing provisions of the Act in the *Order* do not justify the rules in question.

First, the Commission, Order ¶ 127 (JA 70), invokes its power to "[s]tudy new uses for radio, provide for experimental uses of frequencies, and generally encourage the larger and more effective use of radio in the public interest." 47 U.S.C. § 303(g). But the authority to "generally encourage" more effective use of radio does not encompass the imposition of sweeping mandatory regulations that intrude upon the licensee's competitive business practices; it entails instead the general power to promote and incentivize radio innovations, as is clear from the companion terms that empower the Commission to study new uses and provide for experimentation in frequency usage. See Stewart v. Nat'l Educ. Ass'n, 471 F.3d

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169, 175 (D.C. Cir. 2006) ("[N]oscitur a sociis teaches that a word is known by the company it keeps."). The Commission's contrary reading would swallow Title III's scheme of enumerated powers and do away with its fundamental approach of relying upon "free competition" among licensees to promote the Act's objectives, Sanders, 309 U.S. at 474. Moreover, the mobile open-access rules are a limitation on mobile providers and thus a discouragement to provide effective radio service.

Next, the Commission appears to rely upon its ancillary authority to promote "orderly development of an appropriate system of local television broadcasting," and "to oversee MVPD [(multichannel video programming distributor)] services, including direct-broadcast satellite (DBS)." Order ¶ 127 & 128 & nn. 398-408 (JA 70-71). But the Commission never made the required connection that the mobile open-access rules are reasonably necessary to performing those (or other Title III) functions. See Comcast, 600 F.3d at 646, 654. The Commission also merely sprinkles citations to various provisions – 47 U.S.C. §§ 303(f) & (h) (concerning prevention of radio interference), 303(v) (concerning regulation of direct-to-home satellite services); 307(b) (concerning equitable distribution of station licenses in the several States), 548 (concerning diversity and competition in video programming distribution) – in the above-mentioned footnotes of its order, but never shows how the mobile open-access rules are necessary to regulate those

matters. Indeed, the no-blocking rule that applies to websites and competitive "voice or video *telephony*" applications, 47 C.F.R. § 8.5 (emphasis added), has no conceivable nexus to television or satellite broadcasting or MVPD services.

III. THE COMMISSION'S TITLE III AUTHORITY TO GRANT, RENEW, AND MODIFY SPECTRUM LICENSES CANNOT SUSTAIN THE MOBILE OPEN-ACCESS RULES.

The Commission next attempts to defend the mobile open-access rules based upon its power to grant licenses "subject to conditions the Commission imposes on that use," turning the statutory scheme on its head by claiming that its authority to impose conditions is limited only by the public-interest standard and does not require delegated statutory authority. *Order* ¶ 133 & nn. 422-35 (JA 74-75) (citing *inter alia* 47 U.S.C. §§ 304, 307(a), 309, & 316(a)(1)). None of the cited licensing provisions supports this proposition.

First, the Commission misconceives the impact of generally applicable rules and regulations on licenses. A carrier granted a new or renewed license "takes his license subject to all *valid* outstanding rules and regulations," *Functional Music*, *Inc. v. F.C.C.*, 274 F.2d 543, 547 (D.C. Cir. 1959) (emphasis added), and the validity of the regulations is measured against the Commission's organic statute. *See id.* at 548. Similarly, an existing license is deemed modified by a generally applicable regulation only if the rule is valid. *Id.* at 547. Because the Commission

has not identified any valid Title III basis for the mobile open-access rules, they cannot be deemed terms or conditions of a license.

Second, the statutory subsection that governs license conditions forecloses the Commission's position. Although an "FCC licensee takes its license subject to the conditions imposed on its use," and these "conditions may be contained in both the Commission's regulations and in the license," *P & R Temmer v. F.C.C.*, 743 F.2d 918, 928 (D.C. Cir. 1984), the Commission's power to condition licenses derives exclusively from section 303(r). *Regents*, 338 U.S. at 600. As noted above, license conditions may only be imposed "as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this chapter." 47 U.S.C. § 303(r). The Commission's inability to anchor the mobile open-access rules in its substantive grants of authority renders those rules invalid license conditions.

Third, the mobile open-access rules cannot be independently defended as modifications of a license under section 316. The Commission contends that it may exercise its section 316 authority "on a license-by-license basis or through a rulemaking." *Order* ¶ 133 (JA 74-75) (citing *WBEN Inc. v. United States*, 396 F.2d 601 (2d Cir. 1968)). However, *WBEN* stands only for the limited proposition that, when licenses are "modified" by general rulemaking, a licensee is not entitled to a separate section 316 hearing. *Id.* at 618. *WBEN* does not hold that every

rulemaking applicable to existing licensees is an exercise of the Commission's section 316 power, or that section 316 authorizes the Commission to impose rules for which it otherwise lacks delegated authority. Valid regulations modify licenses by the force of the Commission's exercise of lawful delegated powers; they have nothing to do with the public-interest standards or procedures of section 316, which address individualized licensing determinations. Committee for Effective Cellular Rules v. F.C.C., 53 F.3d 1309, 1320 (D.C. Cir. 1995) (provisions that "govern a licensee's request for modification of a particular license ... do not deprive the Commission of its authority to pursue a rulemaking necessary for the orderly conduct of its business") (internal quotation marks omitted).

Furthermore, the Commission has held that "[u]nder § 316, a license is not considered modified when the Commission – acting by rule making – affects the rights of all licensees of a particular class." Amendment of Part 90 of the Commission's Rules to Create the Emergency Medical Radio Service, 11 FCC Rcd 1708, ¶ 11 (1996) ("EMRS Order"). Here, the mobile open-access rules apply to "all licensees of a particular class": namely, "all mobile broadband providers." Order ¶ 135 (JA 75-76). Therefore, under its own precedent, the Order could not have lawfully "modified" existing licenses under section 316. Additionally, the Commission made no determination that these rules should apply to existing

licensees even if they could not apply to new or renewed licensees (which would irrationally skew wireless broadband competition).

Finally, even if arguendo the Commission's licensing powers justify the mobile open-access rules at issue, those rules should be vacated if the Court invalidates the fixed broadband open-access rules. The Commission expressly determined that there should be less stringent open-access rules on mobile Internet providers than on fixed providers. Order ¶ 8, 94 (JA 8, 52-53). Leaving the mobile open-access rules in place while striking down the fixed broadband rules clearly would violate the Commission's expressed intention to subject mobile Internet providers to a lighter regulatory touch, and "[s]everance and affirmance of a portion of an administrative regulation is improper if there is substantial doubt that the agency would have adopted the severed portion on its own." North Carolina v. EPA, 531 F.3d 896, 929 (D.C. Cir. 2008) (internal quotation marks omitted). Because there is no indication that the Commission would have imposed open-access rules solely on mobile Internet providers, the rules should be vacated in their entirety. See MD/DC/DE Broad. Ass 'n v. FCC, 236 F.3d 13, 22 (D.C. Cir. 2001), reh'g denied, 253 F.3d 732, 734 (D.C. Cir. 2001).

CONCLUSION

For the reasons stated above, this Court should vacate the *Order* and the mobile open-access rules.

Document #1416053

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January 18, 2013

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

I hereby certify that the text of the foregoing Initial Brief of Petitioners contains no more than 3,980 words, as reported by the word processing system on which it was prepared, including footnotes and citations, and excluding the corporate disclosure statement, table of contents, table of citations, statement with respect to oral argument, any addendum containing statutes, rules or regulations, and any certificates of counsel, in compliance with FRAP Rule 32(a).

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

Pursuant to Rules 25(b) and (d) and 31 of the Federal Rules of
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States Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit by using the CM/ECF system. I
further certify that nine copies of the foregoing will be filed by hand with the
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I certify further that I have directed that copies of the foregoing document be mailed by U.S. First-Class Mail to any persons who are not registered as CM/ECF users, unless another attorney representing the same party is receiving electronic service.

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January 18, 2013

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